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Readings Booklet

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Part B: Reading

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Grade 12 Diploma Examination

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June 1995

**English 30 Part B: Reading
Readings Booklet
Grade 12 Diploma Examination**

Description

Part B: Reading contributes 50% of the total English 30 Diploma Examination mark.

There are 7 reading selections in the Readings Booklet and 70 questions in the Questions Booklet.

Time: 2 hours. You may take an additional 1/2 hour to complete the examination.

Instructions

- Be sure that you have an English 30 Readings Booklet **and** an English 30 Questions Booklet.
- You may **not** use a dictionary, thesaurus, or other reference materials.

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I. Questions 1 to 10 in your Questions Booklet are based on the essay “Too Far from the Madding Crowd.”

from TOO FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD

Welcome, oh fog and smog. Hello, crowds and sweet pollution. Come, pretty traffic, let me kiss thee. I have left rural England forever (and I mean *forever*. In the future, I do not even want to see it through a train window. I shall wrestle with other passengers to pull the blinds down).

5 On the day we left, a friend called. “You sound euphoric,” he said. “Your wife sounds very euphoric.” She was singing and howling and practically hysterical with the joy of it. Our friend had just moved from London to Limpley Stoke, 100 miles west of London, a move that would stagger Italian farmers (they will not even live on their farms because it is so boring. They prefer to commute
10 out from Florence).

An idealized version of the countryside is sold to us up hill and down dale at every possible moment. And what is the result? Throughout world history, migration has always been from the country to the town, and for very good reasons. (The Samaritans’ distress hot line receives two-and-a-half times more
15 calls from the rural than from the urban population.) But now, for the first time ever, millions are going in the opposite direction. Are they mad?

And now you will look at me and say, “Well, you knew the countryside was a bunch of pesticide-sodden fields joined together by freeways and subject to everlasting debates over planning, a tree-filled suburbia, and backdrop for real-
20 estate sales, where nothing of interest has happened since Creation. So why did you go?”

Now we come to the main point: *J'accuse “Country Living.”* Like the Moonies,¹ this glossy magazine leads perfectly sane middle-class people to behave in staggering ways. “The Aga [cast-iron stove] is a way of life,” the magazine
25 said, and I believed it. “Happiness is not possible without exposed beams.” Oh, I remember all of the articles. “Should one buy a paddock?” “Give your child a perfect country childhood.” How to buy a pony. Entertaining the village. Carefree cooking. Making the most of your porch. Oh, how we laughed.

Then one day we had a baby, and years of brainwashing took effect. The
30 paddock factor seized us by the throat. In our mind’s eye, apple-cheeked infants ran in past the roses underneath the dried flowers and up to the stripped pine table to eat home-baked cakes. So off we set to Podley (I have changed the name to protect the guilty. The innocent need no protection). What did we find?

In fact, rural England has been dying for as long as anyone can remember. It
35 died when the railroads opened and when the railroads closed. It died when

Continued

¹the Moonies—followers of a worldwide religious cult

everybody left and when everybody came back. But rigor mortis² finally set in between 1984 and 1990.

Every time there is a barn dance or festival in Upper Podley, the villagers (some of whom have lived here as long as six months) get out the same old hay 40 bales. There are only six in the whole village.

I once saw two elegant women going out for a walk. They tiptoed gingerly out of Honeypot Cottage, wearing taupe cotton designer jodhpurs, knee-length lace-up boots, wide-brimmed hats, and floral shawls. They walked halfway across a rutted, uninteresting field, then turned around and went back in again. So

45 bracing,³ darling. Nobody but nobody knows anything about rural matters. (If a foal is born in Podley, half the village turns out to videotape the occasion. It is like a press conference for Madonna.)

In our village, the only ambition of the rector⁴ is to get the congregation to call him "Roger." Sadly, this is the one thing that they are not prepared to do.

50 They have not spent \$850,000 on a house (with paddock), given their children a country childhood, and spent the whole afternoon hanging dried flowers to say, "Hello, Roger." No, they want to cycle past with fresh bread in the bicycle basket, ring the bell, and say, "Morning, rector; lovely day." It is part of the rural idyll. They have paid for it.

55 Our experience has not been blissful at all. What is this myth that the countryside is wonderful for children? They never see an animal, because the animals are all locked up. They cannot get into a field ("KEEP OUT") to run freely through it. My daughter just lies on the floor, sucking her thumb, bored to tears, watching Dumbo videos, because the countryside has nothing more to offer.

60 Its facilities and rewards are nil.

And the Aga. It is a way of life all right, particularly in the summer. It heats the food, heats the house, and heats the water. The piping heat warms the dream cottage day and night. The only problem is that between May and September, with temperatures reaching 80 degrees outside, you have to walk around stark 65 naked with the windows open. The kitchen is like a Burmese rubber plantation. The only alternative is to stop cooking altogether and use cold water until the winter months return.

As for exposed beams, why doesn't *Country Living* do a feature on how you can hear every word in the room above or below? If somebody is in bed, you have 70 to whisper in the sitting room. Exchanging intimate chatter in the bedroom, you

Continued

²rigor mortis—the stiffening of the muscles of the dead

³bracing—invigorating, stimulating

⁴rector—minister, clergyman in charge of a parish

might as well use a loudspeaker.

Noise in the countryside is intolerable, not least from the shooting fraternity. On Saturday mornings, business syndicates engage in the mass slaughter of everything that moves. The only thing that drowns out these sportsmen are the 75 low-flying military jets that are such a feature.

I think there was a protest meeting about that. But then there was about everything: Protest is now the main rural pastime. I went to one meeting at which the people who lived at the Old Schoolhouse, the Old Bakery, the Old Shop, the Old Saddlery, the Old Mill, the Old Forge, and the Old Rectory got together to 80 discuss the fact that the village community is in grave danger of dying out. (A developer wants to build 300 houses and a bus station, which they found unacceptable.) The fact that the community has been dead from the eyeballs up and down for the past 50 years does not seem to have dawned on them. They move in, renovate the cottage, extend it to three times the original size, build a six- 85 foot wall around the garden, switch on the burglar alarm, then go to Australia for six months. A bus station could only offer an improvement.

In February, we woke up to a typical winter's morning: It was baking hot, and there was a breeze gusting at 120 miles per hour. We opened the window to find that the entire forest had blown away. At this point, we decided that our rural 90 idyll was at an end. Basically, we are moving back to London so that we can go out for a walk. In the countryside, it is not possible to do this. All of the land belongs to somebody else, and you can tramp dust-filled, paved lanes all day, avoiding moving trucks and hurtling Range Rovers, trying to find a footpath. We had to drive along a highway for 20 minutes to reach one.

95 But now the nightmare is over. My children have pink cheeks for the first time in ages. We walk in the city streets with gratitude, knowing that there are theatres and day-care centers and parks and pools and every civilized facility known to man. But, lo and hark, a beauteous traffic jam has formed beneath my window. I must away and hug it.

Stephen Pile
Contemporary British journalist

II. Questions 11 to 17 in your Questions Booklet are based on this poem.

CYCLOPS¹

You, going along the path,
mosquito-doped, with no moon, the flashlight
a single orange eye

unable to see what is beyond
5 the capsule of your dim
sight, what shape

contracts to a heart
with terror, bumps
among the leaves, what makes
10 a bristling noise like a fur throat

Is it true you do not wish to hurt them?

Is it true you have no fear?
Take off your shoes, then,
let your eyes go bare,
15 swim in their darkness as in a river

do not disguise
yourself in armour.

They watch you from hiding:
you are a chemical
20 smell, a cold fire, you are
giant and indefinable

In their monstrous night
thick with possible claws
where danger is not knowing,

25 you are the hugest monster.

Margaret Atwood

Contemporary Canadian poet,
novelist, short story writer, critic

¹Cyclops—in Greek mythology, a giant with a single eye in the middle of its forehead

III. Questions 18 to 29 in your Questions Booklet are based on this excerpt from the essay "If You Drop a Stone . . ."

from IF YOU DROP A STONE . . .

If you drop a stone into the ocean the impact is as great as if you drop it into a farmer's pond. The difference is that the ocean doesn't seem to care. It swallows the stone and rolls on. But the pond, if the stone is large enough, breaks into waves and ripples that cover its surface and are audible in every cranny along its banks.

5 So it is with life in a metropolis and life in a small town. It takes a colossal event to affect a city. After the bombing of Hamburg in which eighty thousand people were killed, the city was functioning within a few days. Grief did not paralyse it because, to the survivors, most of the casualties were people they had never met. But a single murder can convulse a small town for the reason that in 10 such a community people care who lives and who dies. They care because they know each other. All knowledge is relative to our capacity to grasp its details, and no matter what the communists and industrial organizers may say, no man can think humanly if he thinks in terms of masses. In the small town, and not in the 15 metropolis, human life is understood in fundamental terms.

Because I grew up in a smallish town, this idea struck me with the force of a shock the first time I saw a play in London about London life. I marvelled how any audience could believe in it. Apparently, I thought, Londoners don't know each other and the playwright has taken advantage of their ignorance. A play as 20 superficial as this, I said to myself when I left the theatre, could never succeed in Halifax.

My youthful reaction was naïve, but it was not stupid. I did not know then, as I have learned since, that practically no creative ideas have ever originated in a megalopolis.¹ The prelude to creation, as every parent knows, is intimacy. I had 25 come straight to London from an intimate town, and what we knew about each other in that town could have kept a Balzac² supplied with material for life. Small-town gossip may be notorious, but by no means all of it is malicious. It has one virtue which its metropolitan imitators, the newspapers, cannot claim. Most of it has personal significance for the people who listen to it.

30 We knew in our town, for example, and we knew in detail, how our wealthiest citizens had made their money. Although we did not know a neurosis from a psychosis, we understood, and made allowances for, the family conditions which caused one man to be aggressive and another subservient, one woman to be

Continued

¹megalopolis—an extensive, heavily populated, continuously urban area, including any number of cities

²Balzac—19th-century French novelist known for the length and detail of his writings

charming and another to be a shrew. We had a sixth sense which the more
35 intelligent city-dwellers lack—a sense of time. We knew that a family, like Rome,
is not built in a day.

Small-town knowledge may seem petty, but the sum of it is vast. Through a
multitude of intimate details people come to know the best and the worst about each
40 other, and concealment of character is impossible over a lifetime. A ruthless or a
cunning man can ride roughshod over his neighbours and cop most of the money in
the place. In every small town there are always a few who try this, and at least one
45 who succeeds. They make bad bargains, for they spend the rest of their days
knowing exactly what their neighbours think and say about them. In the small
town, since everyone knows the sins of everyone else, each man must live as best he
50 can with the knowledge that his faults and weaknesses are part of the lore of the
whole community. That is what I mean by saying that in a small town people know
life as it really is. That is why Halifax or Peterborough has a better chance of
producing a Balzac than London or New York, and why a little place like Bermuda,
55 where the stakes are really high, could produce a second Shakespeare if some
Bermudian had the genius and nerve to write as Shakespeare did.

But for the past two hundred years the small towns have failed in what should
be their mission, which is the illumination of life. Only to a very small extent has
their unrivalled knowledge of life been used for artistic purposes. They have given
the world nearly all its famous writers and artists, but the moment their gifted
55 children are ready to produce they are compelled to leave home and emigrate to the
city. "Appearances must be maintained," a small-town friend said to me not long
ago; "otherwise life couldn't go on." But to maintain appearances is the one thing
no creative artist can ever do. If he tries, his work shows as much liveliness and
60 veracity as the average obituary column. So, for freedom's sake, he moves to the
big city and there he tends to stay. That is why for the past two hundred years art
has always been associated in people's minds with the life of the metropolis.

But the metropolis—London, Paris, New York, Rome—does not nurture art. It
merely gives the immigrant artist or writer freedom to paint or write as he pleases.
And it exacts a bitter price for this freedom, the loss of the small-town intimacy
65 from which all life-knowledge derives. That is why so many writers over the past
two hundred years have done their best work before they were forty. In their early
years in the big city, they availed themselves of the freedom it offered to be
themselves. They wrote, generally, of the life they had lived in their native regions.
But as they grew older they inevitably consumed their vital material, and in middle
70 age they tended to run dry. The metropolis which was now their home failed to
provide them with the life-giving material they required.

Continued

75 The very freedom the big city grants is based on a kind of indifference to the individual, an indifference that springs from ignorance. The city has no real gossip. The emotional upheavals which shatter families are swallowed up by the city as the ocean swallowed the *Titanic*, and to the onlooking artist they seem almost as meaningless as traffic accidents because he cannot possibly know, much less feel, the forces which caused them.

When modern writers attempt to use metropolitan life as the material for tragedy their work is usually cold and dry. This has been especially notable in the 80 English-speaking centres of London and New York. It is true that Dickens was a Londoner; it is equally true that he saw only the surface of things. As for New York, in the whole of American literature not a single great book has been based on its life.

85 How could it be? In New York, who cares who commits suicide? The crowds massed in the street to see if the stranger will jump from the skyscraper window are not interested in the man, because they do not know him. They are interested only in the spectacle. In New York, who cares who cheats whom? Or who survives through endurance? Or who, by denial of himself, wins spiritual 90 greatness? This does not imply that New York is less noble than a small town. It merely implies that in terms of art it is too large for any individual artist to handle.

95 It has always been the same—without intimacy, there can be no creation. Republican Rome was a relatively small town. Florence, Genoa, Venice, and Pisa, in the days of their glory, were about a quarter the size of Ottawa. In Shakespeare's London everyone who mattered knew everyone else, and we can be pretty certain that the characters who live in Shakespeare's plays were modelled on people the playwright knew personally or had heard about from the intimate gossip of others who did.

100 But these wonderful small towns had one thing in common besides the intimate knowledge of life which all small towns share. It never occurred to them that their knowledge should be repressed "in order that life might go on." There was no conspiracy of silence when it came to writing books and plays. The citizens were not afraid of gossip. In such communities, a man like Mackenzie King could never have become Prime Minister, nor would a generation of public servants have admired his theory that a leader should veil his thoughts in the 105 stiffest language possible lest the public become sufficiently interested to make an effort to find out what he was talking about.

It seems to me, thinking along these lines, that the cultural future of Canada is opposed only by fear of what the neighbours will say. For Canada, by and large, is still a nation of small towns. Toronto, for all its sprawling size, has a small-

Continued

110 town psychology. So, when it comes down to it, does Montreal; in this city we still have a great deal of the intimate small-town knowledge of life which New York and London lack. It has made us shrewder than we realize. We know, for example, that our present material prosperity does not mean, in itself, that we are a great country. We know intuitively that we will become great only when we

115 translate our force and knowledge into spiritual and artistic terms. Then, and only then, will it matter to mankind whether Canada has existed or not.

Hugh MacLennan (1907–1990)
Canadian novelist and essayist

IV. Questions 30 to 39 in your Questions Booklet are based on this excerpt from the novel *Adventures in Two Worlds*.

from ADVENTURES IN TWO WORLDS

The author, a young medical doctor who spent his first working year in the glamorous position of ship's doctor in the tropics, describes an event from his new position as assistant to Dr. Cameron in a small village in Scotland.

There was a knock at the door. Dr. Cameron opened it and Lachlan Mackenzie stood in the doorway, cap in hand—a poor, shiftless-looking crofter,¹ very much abashed by his surroundings, and terribly nervous under the doctor's interrogating eye.

5 "It's the boy, Doctor," he muttered, twisting his cap. "The wife thinks it's the croup."

 "How long has he been poorly, Lachlan?"

 This friendly use of his name gave the young fellow confidence.

 "Two days, Doctor—but we didna' think it was the croup. . . ."

10 "Ay, ay, Lachlan. The croup! Just so, just so." A pause. "How did ye get in?"

 "I just walk it in, Doctor—it's no that far."

 Not far! It was seven miles from Inverbeg to Tannochbrae.

 Cameron rubbed his cheek slowly.

15 "All right, Lachlan man! Don't you worry. Away with Janet now and have your tea while the gig's being got round."

 Silence in the dining room when he had gone. Cameron reflectively stirred his tea. Almost apologetically he said:

20 "I can't be hard on a poor devil like that. It's a weakness I never seem to get over. He owes me for his wife's last confinement—he'll never pay it. But I'll get out the gig, drive seven miles, see the child, drive seven miles back. And what do you think I'll mark against him in the book? One and six²—if I don't forget. And what does it matter if I do forget? He'll never pay me a red bawbee³ in any case. What a life for a man who loves fiddles!"

25 Silence again; then I ventured:

 "Shall I do the call?"

 Cameron took a long pull at his tea. There was bright satire in his eye as he said:

Continued

¹crofter—one who cultivates a small tenant farm

²One and six—one shilling and sixpence

³bawbee—an old Scottish coin, also a colloquial expression for a halfpenny

“That’s a braw⁴ wee black bag ye’ve got—ay, I see it on the sofa—brand-new and shiny, with your stethoscope and all the new contrivances inside, bonny and complete. No wonder ye’re fair itchin’ to use it.” He looked me straight in the face. “All right! Ye can go. But let me warn you, my lad, in a practice like mine it’s not the bag that matters—it’s the man!” He got up. “Do the call then, and I’ll do the surgery.⁵ Take some antitoxin with you to be safe. It’s on the right-hand shelf as you go in the back room. Here! I’ll show ye. I’m not wantin’ you to drive seven miles to find out that croup is liable to mean diphtheria.”

The gig was waiting outside the front porch, with Lachlan already in the back, and Jamie, the groom, standing ready with the waterproof sheet. We set off through the wet, blustery night.

In the village the rain fell heavily enough, but when we crossed the bridge and breasted the hill it broke upon us in torrents. The wind drove full into our teeth like a hurricane.

Fifteen minutes, and I was half drenched; my hat saturated, trickles of water oozing down my neck, and my precious bag, which I held upon my knees, streaming like a wet seal. I wanted to curse the weather, the practice, and Cameron; but I shut my teeth and said nothing.

It was bad, bad going. The road was dark, too, the gig lamps so blurred by a film of mud that Jamie had difficulty in keeping the horse upon the road. Away to the right, behind massed firs, were the lights of Darroch, vague, unfriendly; and to the left, lying like a great dark beast, the amorphous bulk of the Ardfillan Hills.

We went on through the pitch blackness and the rain in silence. Then from ahead came the quick lapping of water against some hidden shore.

“The loch!”⁶ said Jamie, by way of explanation. They were the only words spoken during the journey.

The unseen road wound now by this angry, unseen water. Then, three miles on, we bore sharply to the left and stopped finally at a small steading where a single illuminated window seemed somehow swamped and hopeless in the great void of sodden blackness.

As we climbed out of the gig, Lachlan’s wife opened the door. She looked no more than a girl despite her clumsy sacking apron and uncouth brogues. A coil of hair fell carelessly down her neck, and her big eyes were dark and youthful against the anxious pallor of her face. She helped me out of my wet coat in silence; then, though she still said not a word, her worried eye indicated the kitchen bed. I

Continued

⁴braw—Scottish for “fine” or “fine-looking”

⁵the surgery—the clinic or office where people wanting medical attention attend

⁶loch—lake

walked over to it, my boots squelching on the stone-flagged⁷ floor.

65 A little boy of three lay tossing under a single blanket, his brow damp with sweat, his face completely livid as he gasped for breath. I asked for a spoon, but did not use it; instead, with my finger I depressed the child's tongue. Yes! The whole of the fauces⁸ covered with thick, greenish-white membrane. Laryngeal⁹ diphtheria!

70 "I've made him some gruel, Doctor," the mother murmured, "but he doesna' . . . doesna' seem to fancy it."

"He can't swallow," I said.

Because I was nervous my voice sounded unsympathetic, even harsh.

"Is he bad, then, Doctor?" she whispered, with a hand at her breast.

75 Bad! I thought, with my fingers on the pulse. She doesn't dream how bad he is! Bending down, I made a complete and careful examination. There was no doubt at all—the child was dying. What a horrible position, I thought again, that this should be my first case.

I went to my bag, opened it, filled my big syringe with 8,000 units of 80 antidiphtheritic serum. The child barely moaned as the needle sank into his thigh and the serum slowly filtered in. To gain time I went back to the fire. Jamie and Lachlan were in the room now, too, for it was the only warm place in the house. They stood together by the door. I could feel their eyes on me, watchful, expectant, together with the terrified eyes of the mother. I was the centre of that 85 humble room. They looked to me to do something for the child.

What was I to do? I knew very well what I should do. But I was afraid. I returned to the bed. If anything, the boy was worse. In half an hour, before the serum could act, he would be dead from obstruction of the windpipe. Another 90 wave of fear came over me. I had to make up my mind. Now—at once—or it would be too late.

Automatically I faced round. I felt myself so young, so utterly inept and inexperienced in the face of the great elemental forces which surged within the room. I said in a manner wholly unimpressive:

95 "The boy has diphtheria. The membrane is blocking the larynx. There's only one thing to do. Operate. Open the windpipe below the obstruction."

The mother wrung her hands, and screamed:

"Oh, no, Doctor, no!"

I turned to Jamie.

Continued

⁷stone-flagged—broad flat stones (flagstones)

⁸fauces—the cavity at the back of the mouth

⁹Laryngeal—pertaining to the larynx or the cavity at the upper end of the human windpipe that contains the vocal cords

“Lift the boy onto the table.”

100 There was a second’s hesitation; then slowly Jamie went over and lifted the almost senseless child on to the scrubbed pine table. But at that Lachlan broke down.

“I canna’ stand it! I canna’ stand it!” he cried weakly, and looked around desperately for an excuse. “I’ll away and put the horse in the stable.”

105 Blubbering, he rushed out.

Now the mother had recovered herself. Pale as a ghost, her hands clenched fiercely, she looked at me.

“Tell me what to do, and I’ll do it.”

“Stand there and hold his head back tight!”

110 I swabbed the skin of the child’s throat with iodine. I took a clean towel and laid it across those glazing eyes. The case was far beyond an anaesthetic; madness to think of using it. Jamie was holding the oil lamp near. Setting my teeth, I picked up the lancet. I made the incision with a steady hand, but I felt my legs trembling beneath me. A deep incision, but not deep enough. I must go deeper, 115 deeper—go boldly in, yet watch all the time for the jugular vein. If I cut that vein . . . ! I widened the incision, using the blunt end of the scalpel, searching desperately for the white cartilage of the trachea.¹⁰ The child, roused by pain, struggled like a fish in a strangling net. God! would I never find it? I was muddling hopelessly, messing about—I knew it—the child would die; they would 120 say that I had killed him. I cursed myself in spirit. Beads of sweat broke out on my brow, as I remembered, suddenly, MacEwen’s fatal words: “*You will never be a surgeon.*”

125 The child’s breathing was terrible now, thin, infrequent; the whole of his tiny thorax¹¹ sucked and sobbed over each frightful, useless breath. The neck veins were engorged, the throat livid, the face blackening. Not a minute longer, I thought! He’s finished, and so am I. For one sickening instant I had a quick vision of all the operations I had known—of the cold, immaculate precision of the Infirmary theatre,¹² and then, by frightful contrast, this struggling, desperate thing dying under my knife upon a kitchen table by the flare of an oil lamp, while the 130 wind howled and stormed outside. Oh, God, I prayed, help me, help me now.

I felt my eyes misting. A great emptiness possessed my whole being. And then under my searching knife the thin white tube sprang into view. Swiftly I incised it, and in the instant the child’s gasping ceased. Instead, a long clear

Continued

¹⁰trachea—the windpipe

¹¹thorax—section of the body containing the lungs

¹²Infirmary theatre—the operating room of a clinic or hospital

135 breath of air went in through the opening. Another—another. The cyanosis¹³ vanished, the pulse strengthened. Swept by a terrific reaction, I felt that I was going to collapse. Afraid to move, I kept my head down to hide the smarting tears that sprang into my eyes. I've done it, I thought; oh, God, I've done it after all!

140 Later I slipped the tiny silver tracheotomy tube into the opening. I washed the blood from my hands, lifted the boy back to bed. The temperature had fallen a point and a half. As I sat by the bedside, watching, cleaning the tube of mucus, I 145 felt a queer, benign interest in the child—I studied his little face, no longer strange to me.

From time to time the mother replenished the fire so silently she was like a shadow in the room. Jamie and Lachlan were asleep upstairs. At five in the 150 morning I gave another 4,000 units of serum. At six the child was sleeping, far less restive¹⁴ than before. At seven I rose and stretched myself. Smiling, I said:

“He'll do now, I expect!” And I explained to the mother the method of cleaning out the tube. “In ten days it'll all be healed up good as new.”

155 Now there was no terror in her eyes, but a gratitude—moving and inarticulate—like the gratitude of some dumb creature to a god.

The horse was harnessed, the gig brought around. We all drank a cup of tea standing. The rain had stopped long since. And at half past seven Jamie and I were off, striking through the pale glory of the morning. Strangely, Jamie was no longer taciturn; he had a word for this and that—a word of comradeship which fell 160 graciously upon my ears.

It was close on nine when, tired, unshaven, and clutching the mud-splashed bag, I stumbled into the dining room of Arden House. Cameron was there, fresh as a new pin, whistling a little tune softly, between his teeth—he had an exasperating habit of whistling in the morning!—as he inspected a dish of bacon and eggs.

165 He looked me up and down; then with a dry twinkle in his eye, before I could speak, he declared:

“There's one guid thing has happened anyway! Ye've taken the newness off your bag.”

A.J. Cronin (1896–1981)
Scottish physician who became a novelist

¹³cyanosis—a condition in which the skin turns blue because of inadequate oxygen in the blood

¹⁴restive—restless

V. Questions 40 to 49 in your Questions Booklet are based on this poem.

COMMON MAGIC

Your best friend falls in love
and her brain turns to water.
You can watch her lips move,
making the customary sounds,
5 but you can see they're merely
words, flimsy as bubbles rising
from some golden sea where she
swims sleek and exotic as a mermaid.

It's always like that.
10 You stop for lunch in a crowded
restaurant and the waitress floats
toward you. You can tell she doesn't care
whether you have the baked or french fried
and you wonder if your voice comes
15 in bubbles too.

It's not just women either. Or love
for that matter. The old man
across from you on the bus holds
a young child on his knee; he is singing
20 to her and his voice is a small boy
turning somersaults in the green
country of his blood.
It's only when the driver calls his stop
that he emerges into this puzzle
25 of brick and tidy hedges. Only then
you notice his shaking hands, his need
of the child to guide him home.

All over the city
you move in your own seasons
30 through the seasons of others: old women, faces
clawed by weather you can't feel
clack dry tongues at passersby
while adolescents seethe
in their glassy atmospheres of anger.

Continued

35 In parks, the children
are alien life-forms, rooted
in the galaxies they've grown through
to get here. Their games weave
the interface¹ and their laughter
40 tickles that part of your brain where smells
are hidden and the nuzzling textures of things.

It's a wonder anything gets done
at all: a mechanic flails
at the muffler of your car
45 through whatever storm he's trapped inside
and the mailman stares at numbers
from the haze of a distant summer.

Yet somehow letters arrive and buses
remember their routes. Banks balance.
50 Mangoes ripen on the supermarket shelves.
Everyone manages. You gulp the thin air
of this planet as if it were the only
one you knew. Even the earth you're
standing on seems solid enough.
55 It's always the chance word, unthinking
gesture that unlocks the face before you.
Reveals the intricate countries
deep within the eyes. The hidden
lives, like sudden miracles,
60 that breathe there.

Bronwen Wallace (1945–1989)
Canadian poet, short story writer, film maker

¹interface—place where interaction occurs between two systems, regions, experiences, etc.

VI. *Questions 50 to 60 in your Questions Booklet are based on this excerpt from the play King Richard II.*

from KING RICHARD II, Act V, scene i

CHARACTERS:

QUEEN—Isobel, wife of King Richard
RICHARD—King Richard II of England
NORTHUMBERLAND—Earl of Northumberland

Stripped of his royal robes and crown by his cousin HENRY BOLINGBROKE, KING RICHARD asks of BOLINGBROKE only that he be removed from the sight of BOLINGBROKE and those who have betrayed him. BOLINGBROKE obliges him by having him sent under guard to prison in the Tower of London, and names his own coronation day in the coming week. In this scene, ISOBEL, RICHARD's beloved French queen, intercepts RICHARD on the street.

London. A street leading to the Tower

(Enter the QUEEN with her attendants.)

QUEEN: This way the king will come, this is the way
To Julius Caesar's ill-erected tower,¹
To whose flint bosom my condemnéd lord
Is doomed a prisoner by proud Bolingbroke . . .
5 Here let us rest, if this rebellious earth
Have any resting for her true king's queen.

(RICHARD with guards comes into the street.)

10 But soft, but see, or rather do not see,
My fair rose wither—yet look up, behold,
That you in pity may dissolve to dew,
And wash him fresh again with true-love tears . . .
Ah, thou, the model where old Troy did stand!
Thou map of honour, thou King Richard's tomb,
And not King Richard; thou most beauteous inn,
15 Why should hard-favoured grief be lodged in thee,
When triumph is become an alehouse guest?

RICHARD: Join not with grief, fair woman, do not so,
To make my end too sudden. Learn, good soul,

Continued

¹Julius Caesar's ill-erected tower—refers to the medieval belief that Julius Caesar built the Tower of London for evil purposes

20 To think our former state a happy dream,
From which awaked, the truth of what we are
Shows us but this: I am sworn brother, sweet,
To grim Necessity, and he and I
Will keep a league till death. . . . Hie thee to France,
And cloister thee in some religious house.

25 Our holy lives must win a new world's crown,
Which our profane hours here have thrownen down.

QUEEN: What, is my Richard both in shape and mind
Transformed and weak'ned? hath Bolingbroke deposed
Thine intellect? hath he been in thy heart?

30 The lion dying thrusteth forth his paw,
And wounds the earth, if nothing else, with rage
To be o'erpowered, and wilt thou pupil-like
Take the correction, mildly kiss the rod,
And fawn on rage with base humility,
35 Which art a lion and the king of beasts?

RICHARD: A king of beasts, indeed! if aught but beasts,
I had been still a happy king of men
Good sometimes queen, prepare thee hence for France.

40 Think I am dead, and that even here thou takest
As from my death-bed thy last living leave;
In winter's tedious nights sit by the fire
With good old folks, and let them tell thee tales
Of woeful ages long ago betid;
45 And ere thou bid good night, to quit their griefs,
Tell thou the lamentable fall of me,
And send the hearers weeping to their beds:
For why, the senseless brands will sympathize
The heavy accent of thy moving tongue,
50 And in compassion weep the fire out,
And some will mourn in ashes, some coal-black,
For the deposing of a rightful king.

(NORTHUMBERLAND *comes up.*)

NORTHUMBERLAND: My lord, the mind of Bolingbroke
is changed,

55 You must to Pomfret,² not unto the Tower
And, madam, there is order ta'en for you,
With all swift speed you must away to France.

Continued

²Pomfret—castle used for imprisonment in Yorkshire, northern England

60 **RICHARD:** Northumberland, thou ladder wherewithal
 The mounting Bolingbroke ascends my throne,
 65 The time shall not be many hours of age
 More than it is, ere foul sin gathering head
 Shall break into corruption. Thou shalt think,
 Though he divide the realm and give thee half,
 It is too little, helping him to all

70 And he shall think that thou, which knowest the way
 To plant unrightful kings, wilt know again,
 Being ne'er so little urged another way
 To pluck him headlong from the usurped throne:
 The love of wicked men converts to fear,
 75 That fear to hate, and hate turns one or both
 To worthy danger and deserved death.

NORTHUMBERLAND: My guilt be on my head, and there
 an end:

 Take leave and part, for you must part forthwith.

75 **RICHARD:** Doubly divorced! Bad men, you violate
 A twofold marriage—'twixt my crown and me,
 And then betwixt me and my married wife
 Let me unkiss the oath 'twixt thee and me;
 And yet not so, for with a kiss 'twas made

80 Part us, Northumberland—I towards the north,
 Where shivering cold and sickness pines the clime;
 My wife to France, from whence set forth in pomp
 She came adorned hither like sweet May,
 Sent back like Hallowmas³ or short'st of day.

85 **QUEEN:** And must we be divided? must we part?
 RICHARD: Ay, hand from hand, my love, and heart
 from heart.

QUEEN: Banish us both, and send the king with me.

NORTHUMBERLAND: That were some love, but
 90 little policy.

QUEEN: Then whither he goes, thither let me go.

RICHARD: So two, together weeping, make one woe.
 Weep thou for me in France, I for thee here;
 Better far off than near, be ne'er the near.

95 Go, count thy way with sighs, I mine with groans.

Continued

³Hallowmas—November 1, All Saints Day, a feast day offering prayers for the release of souls from purgatory

QUEEN: So longest way shall have the longest moans.

RICHARD: Twice for one step I'll groan, the way
being short,

And piece the way out with a heavy heart . . .

100 Come, come, in wooing sorrow let's be brief,
Since, wedding it, there is such length in grief:
One kiss shall stop our mouths, and dumbly part—
Thus give I mine, and thus take I thy heart. (*They kiss.*)

QUEEN: Give me mine own again, 'twere no good part

105 To take on me to keep and kill thy heart:
(*They kiss again.*)

So, now I have mine own again, be gone,
That I may strive to kill it with a groan.

RICHARD: We make woe wanton with this fond delay,

110 Once more, adieu, the rest let sorrow say. (*They go.*)

William Shakespeare

VII. Questions 61 to 70 in your Question Booklet are based on this excerpt from the play *Antigone*.

from ANTIGONE

OEDIPUS, who was the father of ANTIGONE and ISMENE, also had two sons, ETEOCLES and POLYNICES. After OEDIPUS died, it was agreed that the two sons should share his throne, each to reign over Thebes in alternate years. But when ETEOCLES, the elder son, had reigned a full year and time had come for him to step down, he refused to yield up the throne to his younger brother and there was civil war. The two brothers fought and killed one another in single combat just outside the city walls.

Now CREON, brother-in-law of OEDIPUS, is King. CREON has issued a solemn edict that POLYNICES, whom CREON considered to be a deliberate upstart and a traitor to the state, is to be left unburied on the plains as an example to anyone who might threaten state welfare. Any person who attempts to give him burial is to be put to death.

The Greeks believed that a person's soul could never find peace unless the body had proper burial; consequently, burial rites assumed great importance for the ancient Greeks.

It is dawn, grey and ashen, in a house asleep. ANTIGONE steals in from out of doors, through the arch, right. She is carrying her sandals in her hand. She pauses, looking off through the arch, taut, listening, then turns and moves across downstage. The NURSE, who serves as the girls' personal servant, enters through the arch and stands when she sees ANTIGONE.

NURSE: Where have you been?

ANTIGONE: Nowhere. It was beautiful. The whole world was grey when I went out. And now—you wouldn't recognize it. It's like a postcard: all pink, and green and yellow. You'll have to get up earlier, Nurse, if you want to see a world without colour.

5 NURSE: It was still pitch black when I got up. I went to your room, for I thought you might have flung off your blanket in the night. You weren't there.

ANTIGONE (*Comes down the steps*): The garden was lovely. It was still asleep. 10 Have you ever thought how lovely a garden is when it is not yet thinking of men?

Continued

NURSE: You hadn't slept in your bed. I couldn't find you. I went to the back door. You'd left it open.

ANTIGONE: The fields were wet. They were waiting for something to happen.

15 The whole world was breathless, waiting, I can't tell you what a roaring noise I seemed to make alone on the road. It bothered me that whatever was waiting, wasn't waiting for me. I took off my sandals and slipped into a field. (*She moves down to the stool and sits. ISMENE enters through the arch, left. She pauses in front of arch.*)

20 **ISMENE:** Antigone! What are you doing up at this hour? I've just been to your room.

NURSE: My poor baby! Her head's swimming, what with nothing on her stomach, and me standing here like an idiot when I could be getting her something hot to drink. (*NURSE exits.*)

25 **ISMENE:** Aren't you well?

ANTIGONE: Of course I am. Just a little tired. I got up too early. (*ANTIGONE sits on a chair, suddenly tired.*)

ISMENE: I couldn't sleep, either. Antigone, I've thought about it a lot.

ANTIGONE: Have you?

30 **ISMENE:** I thought about it all night long. Antigone, you're mad.

ANTIGONE: Am I?

ISMENE: We cannot do it.

ANTIGONE: Why not?

ISMENE: Creon will have us put to death.

35 **ANTIGONE:** Of course he will. That's what he's here for. He will do what he has to do, and we will do what we have to do. He is bound to put us to death. We are bound to go out and bury our brother. That's the way it is. What do you think we can do to change it?

ISMENE (*Releases ANTIGONE's hand; draws back a step*): I don't want to die.

40 **ANTIGONE:** I'd prefer not to die, myself.

ISMENE: Listen to me, Antigone. I thought about it all night. I'm older than you. I always think things over, and you don't. You are impulsive. You get a notion in your head and you jump up and do the thing straight off. And if it's silly, well, so much the worse for you. Whereas, *I* think things out.

45 **ANTIGONE:** Sometimes it is better not to think too much.

ISMENE: I don't agree with you! (*ANTIGONE looks at ISMENE, then turns and moves to chair behind table. ISMENE leans on end of table top, towards ANTIGONE.*) Oh, I know it's horrible. And I pity Polynices just as much as you do. But all the same, I sort of see what Uncle Creon means.

50 **ANTIGONE:** I don't want to "sort of see" anything.

ISMENE: Uncle Creon is the king. He has to set an example!

Continued

ANTIGONE: But I am not the king; and I don't have to set people examples.

Little Antigone gets a notion in her head—the nasty brat, the wilful, wicked girl; and they put her in a corner all day, or they lock her up in the cellar.

55 And she deserves it. She shouldn't have disobeyed!

ISMENE: There you go, frowning, glowering, wanting your own stubborn way in everything. Listen to me, I'm right oftener than you are.

ANTIGONE: I don't want to be right!

ISMENE: At least you can try to understand.

60 ANTIGONE: Understand! The first word I ever heard out of any of you was the word "understand." Why didn't I "understand" that I must not play with water—cold, black, beautiful flowing water—because I'd spill it on the palace tiles. Or with earth, because earth dirties a little girl's frock. Why didn't I "understand" that nice children don't eat out of every dish at once; or give everything in their pockets to beggars; or run in the wind so fast that they fall down; or ask for a drink when they're perspiring; or want to go swimming when it's either too early or too late, merely because they happen to feel like swimming. Understand! I don't want to understand. There'll be time enough to understand when I'm old. . . . If I ever *am* old.

70 But not now.

ISMENE: He is stronger than we are, Antigone. He is the king. And the whole city is with him. Thousands and thousands of them, swarming through all the streets of Thebes.

ANTIGONE: I am not listening to you.

75 ISMENE: His mob will come running, howling as it runs. A thousand arms will seize our arms. A thousand breaths will breathe into our faces. Like one single pair of eyes, a thousand eyes will stare at us. We'll be driven in a tumbrrel¹ through their hatred, through the smell of them and their cruel, roaring laughter. We'll be dragged to the scaffold for torture, surrounded by guards with their idiot faces all bloated, their animal hands clean-washed for the sacrifice, their beefy eyes squinting as they stare at us. And we'll know that no shrieking and no begging will make them understand that we want to live, for they are like slaves who do exactly as they've been told, without caring about right or wrong. And we shall suffer, we shall feel pain rising in us until it becomes so unbearable that we *know* it must stop. But it won't stop; it will go on rising and rising, like a screaming voice. Oh, I can't, I can't, Antigone! (A pause.)

ANTIGONE: How well you have thought it all out.

ISMENE: I thought of it all night long. Didn't you?

Continued

¹tumbrrel—a crude type of dumpcart used to convey condemned prisoners

90 **ANTIGONE:** Oh, yes.

ISMENE: I'm an awful coward, Antigone.

ANTIGONE: So am I. But what has that to do with it?

ISMENE: But, Antigone! Don't you want to go on living?

ANTIGONE: Go on living! Who was it that was always the first out of bed

95 because she loved the touch of the cold morning air on her bare skin? Who was always the last to bed because nothing less than infinite weariness could wean her from the lingering night? Who wept when she was little because there was too many grasses in the meadow, too many creatures in the field, for her to know and touch them all?

100 **ISMENE** (*Clasps ANTIGONE's hands, in a sudden rush of tenderness*): Darling little sister!

ANTIGONE (*Repulsing her*): No! For heaven's sake! Don't paw me! And don't let us start snivelling! You say you've thought it all out. The howling mob—the torture—the fear of death . . . They've made up your mind for you. Is that it?

105 **ISMENE:** Yes.

ANTIGONE: All right. They're as good excuses as any.

ISMENE: Antigone, be sensible. It's all very well for men to believe in ideas and die for them. But you are a girl! You have everything in the world to make

110 you happy. All you have to do is reach out for it. You are going to be married; you are young; you are beautiful—

ANTIGONE: I am not beautiful.

ISMENE: Yes, you are! Not the way other girls are. But it's always you that the little boys turn to look back at when they pass us in the street. And when you

115 go by, the little girls stop talking. They stare and stare at you, until we've turned a corner.

ANTIGONE (*A faint smile*): "Little boys —little girls."

NURSE (*Calls from off-stage*): Come along, my dove. Come to breakfast.

 (*ISMENE goes to arch and exits.*)

120 **NURSE** (*Enters through arch, speaking as she enters*): Come along my dove. I've made you some coffee and toast and jam. (*She turns towards arch as if to exit.*)

ANTIGONE: I'm not really hungry, Nurse. (*NURSE stops, looks at ANTIGONE, then moves behind her.*)

125 **NURSE:** (*Very tenderly*): Where is your pain?

ANTIGONE: Nowhere, Nanny dear. But you must keep me warm and safe, the way you used to do when I was little. Nanny! Stronger than all fever, stronger than any nightmare, stronger than the shadow of the cupboard that

Continued

130 used to snarl at me and turn into a dragon on the bedroom wall. Stronger than the thousand insects gnawing and nibbling in the silence of the night.
Stronger than the night itself, with the weird hooting of the nightbirds that frightened me even when I couldn't hear them. Nanny, stronger than death, give me your hand, Nanny, as if I were ill in bed and you sitting beside me.

NURSE: My sparrow, my lamb! What is it that's eating your heart out?

135 ANTIGONE: Oh, it's just that I'm a little young still for what I have to go through. But nobody but you must know that.

NURSE (*Places her other arm around ANTIGONE's shoulder*): A little young for what, my kitten?

140 ANTIGONE: Nothing in particular, Nanny. Just—all this. Oh, it's so good that you are here. I can hold your calloused hand, your hand that is so prompt to ward off evil. You are very powerful, Nanny.

NURSE: What is it you want me to do for you, my baby?

145 ANTIGONE: There isn't anything to do, except put your hand like this against my cheek. (*She places the NURSE's hand against her cheek. A pause, then, as ANTIGONE leans back, her eyes shut.*) There! I'm not afraid any more. Not afraid of the wicked ogre, nor of the sandman, nor of the dwarf who steals little children. (*A pause. ANTIGONE resumes on another note.*) Nanny . . .

NURSE: Yes?

ANTIGONE: My dog, Puff . . .

150 NURSE (*Straightens up, draws her hand away*): Well?

ANTIGONE: Promise me that you will never scold her again.

NURSE: Dogs that dirty up a house with their filthy paws deserve to be scolded.

ANTIGONE: I know. Just the same, promise me.

155 NURSE: You mean you want me to let her make a mess all over the place and not say a thing?

ANTIGONE: Yes, Nanny.

NURSE: It isn't fair to take me on my weak side, just because you look a little peaked today . . . Well, have it your own way. We'll mop up and keep our mouth shut. You're making a fool of me, though. (*ISMENE enters through arch, pauses for a moment in front of it when she sees ANTIGONE, then crosses behind table.*)

160 ISMENE: I'm terrified. I'm so afraid that even though it is daylight, you'll still try to bury Polynices. Antigone, little sister, we all want to make you happy—Haemon,² and Nurse, and I, and Puff whom you love. We love you, we are alive, we need you. And you remember what Polynices was like. He was our brother, of course. But he's dead; and he never loved you. He was a bad brother. He was like an enemy in the house. He never thought of you. Why

Continued

²Haemon—Antigone's lover

should you think of him? What if his soul does have to wander through endless time without rest or peace? Don't try something that is beyond your strength. You are always defying the world, but you're only a girl, after all. Stay at home tonight. Don't try to do it, I beg you. It's Creon's doing, not ours.

ANTIGONE: You are too late, Ismene. When you first saw me this morning, I had just come in from burying him.

Jean Anouilh (1910–1987)
Modern French playwright
Antigone was written in 1944

Credits

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English 30: Part B

June 1995

